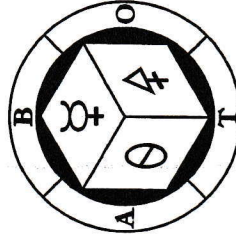


# INTRODUCTION TO TAROT

## LESSON 6



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B.O.T.A.**

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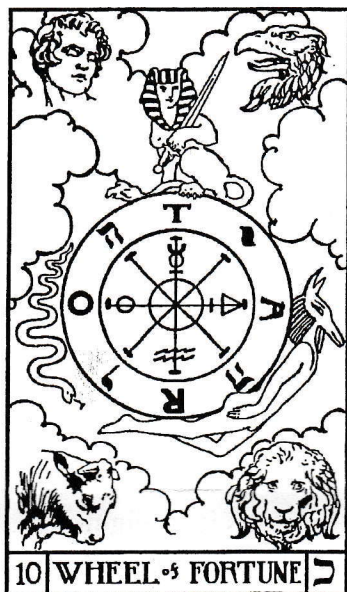
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# INTRODUCTION TO TAROT

## Lesson Six

### KEY 10. THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE



The letter Kaph  $\aleph$  represents the hand of man closed in the act of grasping. Thus it is in contrast to Yod which represents the function of man's hand as the most delicate organ of touch.

To grasp is to take possession. To grasp anything with the mind is to become thoroughly conversant with it. What we really comprehend is ours to control and employ.

Thus the pair of opposites, Wealth and Poverty, correspond truly to the meaning of Kaph. If our grasp of the meaning of events be weak, our control of things is uncertain and our want of understanding manifests as poverty. A powerful grasp of the successive situations in our day to day experience brings wealth.

This wealth may be in dollars and cents, or it may take other forms. The money measure has its limitations; but it is safe to say that he who really comprehends the situation of man in this

world will never suffer material want.

In Tarot, the total sequence of events up to any given moment is represented by Key 0. And, as we look at the surface of the world, what it amounts to, if we judge by appearances only, is "a tale told by an idiot, signifying nothing".

Yet if we observe (Key 1), remember (Key 2), imagine hidden relationships (Key 3), and reason truly (Key 4), we shall comprehend. Our comprehension is symbolized in Tarot by Key 10 and its number is the sum of the numbers from 0 to 4. Thus the Wheel of Fortune represents the full development of the meanings of the Emperor, since 10 is the extension of 4.

Scientific comprehension takes facts like the recurrence of the seasons, the regularity of astronomical phenomena, and similar repetitive activities in man's environment, and works out from observation of these facts, from records of their occurrence, and from deductions concerning the relationships existing among them, various systems in which the idea of rotation, cycles, or the recurrence of events in regular, and therefore predictable, order is fundamental. This is what is behind the symbolism of Key 10.



At the outer corners of the picture are the four mystic animals mentioned by the prophet Ezekiel and appearing again in the Apocalypse. The bull stands for Taurus and for the element of earth. The lion stands for Leo and for the element of fire. The eagle is connected with Scorpio and the element of water. The man is associated with Aquarius and the element of air. Thus the animals correspond to the four implements on the Magician's table, which stand for fire (wand), water (cup), air (sword) and earth (coin or pentacle). Occult tradition associates these four elements with the Divine Name, Jehovah, which is written in Hebrew letters round the outer circle of the wheel.

The outer circle contains the Roman characters spelling the word ROTA. From these four letters the artificial word TAROT is formed by beginning at the top of the wheel, and reading the letters clockwise round it beginning and ending with T. Different arrangements of the same letters also form the name ATOR.

Ator was an ancient Latin rendering of the name of the Egyptian goddess Hathor, personifying Nature, and corresponding more or less to Venus, pictured in Tarot as the Empress. This will serve to remind you that all we are able to comprehend consists of activities which belong to the subconscious field of the Life-power's manifestation. "Nature" is just a generalization from our experience of the different fields included in the ancient classification of the four elements. Whatever is at work in these fields is basically the operation of subconscious powers. This, indeed, is why we control whatever we can comprehend.

Within the outer circle showing the four Hebrew and the four Latin letters is an eight-armed cross. Four arms point to the Hebrew, and four to the Latin letters. The arms of the cross pointing to the Latin letters bear four symbols.

These are derived from alchemy. Beneath the letter T is the alchemical symbol for Mercury. Beside the letter A is the alchemical symbol for Sulphur. The symbol beside the letter O stands for Salt. That above the letter R is used by astrologers for the Sign Aquarius, represented in the upper left-hand corner of Key 10 by the head of a man. It is also an alchemical symbol for dissolution and for the essential secret of the Great Work.

Man, by reason of his self-consciousness, is able to apply the "universal solvent", or alchemical Mercury, to the various appearances constituting his environment. By this means he discovers their real, as distinguished from their apparent, nature. Thus man is able to reduce every form reported by his senses to its primal substance and whenever he does so, he finds that substance to be the limitless Life-power symbolized in Tarot by the Fool.

Then, by exercising his power of mental vision in creative imagination, man is able to fix this primal substance into new shapes and forms. He may do this by the indirect method of invention using machines or other appliances constructed in accordance with his scientific comprehension. Or he may work directly, by mental means only, upon the primal substance and so bring forth forms corresponding to his images. They who are able to do this constitute the inner circle of adepts.

Outside the wheel a serpent descends. It represents the vibrating force associated with the letter Teth and Key 8, involving itself in the conditions of name and form which constitute man's environment.

On the other side ascends a figure having a human body and a jackal's head. This is the Egyptian god Hermanubis, the guide of the soul in its journey through the underworld, and also closely related to the various ideas connected with Mercury and the Magician.

His eye is alongside the letter A which is the Roman equivalent of Aleph. The intellectual consciousness of the more advanced human being **sees**, more or less clearly, what is pictured in Tarot by the Fool (Aleph); but few persons **know** the indwelling Spirit as a direct personal experience.

Yet some have intuitive perception of this Spirit, and thus the ears of Hermanubis are above the letter A in the segment of the wheel containing the letter Yod. Yod is the letter of the Hermit and what is meant by this detail of the symbolism is that though the intellectual consciousness may not experience superconsciousness directly, it may receive intimations concerning that higher order of knowing through the channel of interior hearing.

At the top of the wheel sits a sphinx, like one of those crouching in front of the car in Key 7. Under this creature, which is a synthesis of male and female, human and animal, stands the letter T, corresponding to the final letter of the Hebrew alphabet, Tav ת, and to Key 21 of Tarot. In the table given in HIGHLIGHTS, you will see that Tav represents the Administrative Intelligence. Thus the sphinx, by its relation to this letter, and to the Mercury symbol under the T, represents completion of the Great Work.

To finish the Great Work is to develop the metaphysical senses which correspond to the physical senses. It is to have direct experience of identity with the **One Self**. We must always remember that this experience is not to be confused with theoretical knowledge **about** this identity, nor with philosophical speculations and religious creeds. The average human being does not even know **about** this identity. He simply believes or disbelieves, without knowing the **Self** directly.

The exceptional human being does know, and because he knows, shares consciously in the administration of the laws of nature. His personal activities are at all times in harmony with the way things really are. He is adjusted to the cosmic rhythm. Thus whatever he does works out as planned and he is free from the ups and downs of fortune.

Use this Tarot Key to remind you that the motion of the heavenly bodies veils a Living Organism. **In** it you live and move and have your being. Your consciousness is not separate from the Intelligence which swings the stars through the cosmos. As an aspect of the One Life, your immediate environment becomes enriched as you grasp the significance of this relationship. Your **basic** thinking and feeling rotates in cycles and manifests in the conditions



of your environment. Learn to see the beauty in Life, and life will express back in kind. Learn to become aware of your kinship with all life and you will never know loneliness. Learn to feel the security of Divine Guidance and you will never know poverty. Learn to accept all experience as an enrichment of the soul, and your comprehension of Cosmic Principles will bring the wisdom which passeth understanding. True riches of the soul eliminates the conditions which bring material want.

Tarot will help you to achieve these states of insight in ever greater measure.

### KEY 11. JUSTICE



Lamed ל, the Hebrew equivalent of English "L", means "ox-goad". In contrast to Kaph, the hand which grasps, the goad is a tool, or thing grasped. Spelt in the same way, but with a slight change of pronunciation, the name of this letter, למר, is a verb, meaning "to teach", and thus the ideas represented by our noun **education** are related to Lamed.

An ox-goad is used to guide oxen and to keep them on the road chosen by the driver. Hence ideas of control and direction are connected with this letter.

Up to this point in our study of Tarot we have come upon a pair, or yoke, of oxen. The first is Aleph, corresponding to the Fool, since the letter-name Aleph means ox or bull. The second is Vav, corresponding to the Hierophant, because Vav is the letter of the sign Taurus, the Bull. Furthermore, the idea of yoking is connected with the meanings of the letter Vav.

Hence the idea of education implied by Lamed has to do with the management of this pair of oxen - the superconsciousness typified by the Fool, and the intuitive knowledge of reality symbolized by the Hierophant. To be educated is not to be possessed of an accumulation of facts gathered from without. It is to be able to apply to the conduct of life the inspiration which comes to us from above (Fool), and from within (Hierophant).

Lamed is the second of three Hebrew letters formed like a serpent. Its shape is like that of a snake, uncoiled, the head at the left side of the letter, the body represented by the horizontal line and the tail indicated by the line dropping from the horizontal line at the right side of the letter. It symbolizes the serpent power, coiled and quiescent in the Hebrew character for Teth ת, now extended and active. Thus Fabre d'Olivet, in *THE HEBREW TONGUE RESTORED*, page 377, says of the letter Lamed:

"This character as consonant, belongs to the lingual sound. As symbolic image it represents the arm of man, the wing of a bird, that which extends, raises and unfolds itself. As grammatical sign, it is expansive movement and is applied to all ideas of extension, elevation, occupation, possession. It is, in Hebrew, the directive article, as I have explained in my Grammar, expressing in nouns or actions, a movement of union, dependence, possession or coincidence."

Thus when THE BOOK OF FORMATION assigns action or work to Lamed it agrees with the fundamental meaning of the letter itself. This idea of action adds another thought to our conception of education. He who is truly educated is more than a possessor of information whether gathered from without or from within. He is a person having practical skill. He has drawn forth his powers and has developed ability to apply them to the management and direction of affairs.

To what end? The number 11 gives an answer. It is a pair of 1s. What is shown in Tarot by Key 1, the Magician, is unfolded, augmented, extended by **doubling**, and since the idea of doubling is represented by 2, and by the High Priestess, the Tarot meaning of 11 has to do with the recording and development accomplished by means of the activities represented by the High Priestess, and the result is **balance**.

Observation and memory are the fundamentals of education. Practical skill is the result of training which establishes habits, and these habits are not fully established until our bodies, by the operation of subconsciousness, have been changed.

The body and brain of a pianist, for example, are different from those of one who cannot play. A pianist's hands have a characteristic shape, easily recognized. Whatever skill you may have has left perceptible traces on the structure of your physical mechanism. Thus we have said before that the difference between an adept and an average human being is a difference in physiology. An adept is one who has practical knowledge and makes continual use of everything he knows.

Practical knowledge, moreover, enables one to make adjustments. Hence the name of Key 11 is Justice. Abstract justice is law, and while it is true that human laws are often poor approximations to justice, nevertheless the intent of any code of laws is always toward the establishment of a working arrangement which shall bring the lives of the community governed by that code into harmony with one another and into a position where good shall result from their practical management of human affairs.

Among the zodiacal signs, Libra is attributed to Lamed. It is the only one of the signs which is symbolized by an inanimate object, for its emblem is a pair of scales.

The ruler of Libra is Venus and the sitting figure shown in Key 11 therefore wears a crown and has yellow hair, like the Tarot symbol of Venus, the Empress. She represents creative



imagination in its relation to work. All good work must be planned and planning requires the use of the subconscious power to form clear mental images of intended actions.

Such clear images are effective when they agree with the actual facts of the situation. Whatever their details, their framework must be true to fact. This framework is like the bones in a body, and according to astrology, the planet Saturn, exalted in Libra, rules the bones. Hence one prominent feature of Key 11 is a T-cross which ornaments the dress of the woman. In colored versions of Tarot, this ornament is deep indigo, the tint which, in our color scale, represents the planet Saturn.

The difference between creative imagination and mere fancy is that the former has a solid foundation in fact. Arabian story-tellers used fancy to weave their magic carpet. The Wrights dealt with hard facts and developed the airplane.

To make adjustments which will change a problem into an achievement, two things are necessary. We must weigh and measure the facts correctly. Without accurate measurements, without correct standards, we are sure to fail. This is what is at the bottom of most of our troubles. We go by "rule of thumb". We are content with guesses and with approximations. So we blunder along like oxen without drivers, and our hit-and-miss procedure defeats our efforts.

Yet the facts are not all. There must be action in harmony with our knowledge of the actual situation. Moreover, this action must be aimed at eliminating whatever restricts our freedom. Hence the scales of Justice are balanced by her sword, symbol of terror to evil-doers.

Metaphorically, an evil-doer is any activity which restricts freedom and interferes with the harmonious adjustment of our lives. Whatever leads away from the path of liberation, whatever deflects the arrow of purpose from the mark at which it is aimed, must be eliminated. You will notice that this detail of Key 11 is also a feature of Key 10 where the sphinx holds a sword. Remember also that Zain, the sword, is the letter symbolized by the Lovers, a picture of two persons standing side by side like the two 1s in the number 11.

Practical skill in adjusting one's life is an application of the power of discrimination pictured in Key 6; and since 11 is the sum of 5 and 6, we may say also that practical skill is discrimination combined with intuition. It is not surprising, therefore, that we find many instances of sudden flashes of intuitive perception among workers in scientific research. Such persons seek patiently for facts, and their quest for truth requires them to develop great technical skill in the manipulation of delicate instruments requiring fine adjustments.

Key 11 is the complement of Key 10, just as Key 1 is the complement of Key 0. The Wheel of Fortune is the Tarot symbol for cosmic law. Justice is the symbol for the application of that law through human action. Hence the central figure of Key 11 is a seated woman. Her posture is passive and receptive, and she represents the subconscious side of our lives.

It may seem to be a paradox to speak of passivity in connection with action, but what is meant is that the basis of successful action is the mental state of agreement with the nature of things as they really are. Thus Key 11 is also connected with the idea of faith.

Faith, "the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things unseen", is the basis of right action. True faith is the habitual (therefore subconscious) conviction that nothing whatever in the cosmic order is inimical to man. Whatever is, is for our good; and when we have the wit to discover what is behind the appearances surrounding us, and the courage and skill to do what we know, we find that nothing in the universe is against us. Appearances to the contrary are due to our ignorance. When we measure facts correctly, especially the facts about human nature, we shall be able to establish justice in our lives and in our surroundings.